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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
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09/927,594

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Ja-Hyung Han

8021-53 (SS-15510-US)

8187

7590

07/28/2004

Frank Chau
Suite 501
1900 Hempstead Turnpike
East Meadow, NY 11554

EXAMINER

QUINTO, KEVIN V

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

2826

DATE MAILED: 07/28/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/927,594

Applicant(s)

HAN ET AL.

Examiner

Kevin Quinto

Art Unit

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 10 August 2001.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-18 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☒ Claim(s) 1,2,4,5 7-15, and 17 is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 3,6 and 18 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 16 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☒ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Specification

1. The title of the invention is not descriptive. A new title is required that is clearly indicative of the invention to which the claims are directed.

Claim Objections

2. Claim 16 objected to because of the following informalities: "(Wsix)" should be (WSix). Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

3. The following is a quotation of the first paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall contain a written description of the invention, and of the manner and process of making and using it, in such full, clear, concise, and exact terms as to enable any person skilled in the art to which it pertains, or with which it is most nearly connected, to make and use the same and shall set forth the best mode contemplated by the inventor of carrying out his invention.

4. Claims 3 and 6 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the enablement requirement. The claim(s) contains subject matter which was not described in the specification in such a way as to enable one skilled in the art to which it pertains, or with which it is most nearly connected, to make and/or use the invention. The specification does not disclose the unit of measurement for the dimensions of the layers described in claims 3 and 6.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

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5. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

6. Claim 18 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Takebuchi (USPN 6,018,195) in view of Komori (USPN 6,492,674 B1) and further in view of Sheu et al. (USPN 6,350,654 B1).

7. In reference to claim 18, Takebuchi (USPN 6,018,195) discloses a similar device. Figures 19 and 20 of Takebuchi disclose a semiconductor non-volatile memory device with a gate pattern having a first conductive layer (4a) and a second conductive layer (4b). A dielectric layer (3') is between the first conductive layer (4a) and a second conductive layer (4b). A polishing stopper (8 and 10) is formed on the gate pattern and the substrate (1). An interlayer insulating layer (6) is formed on the polishing stopper (8 and 10). A common source line (9) is in an etched portion of the interlayer insulating layer (6). Takebuchi discloses the use of a silicide with the gate pattern (column 16, lines 38-44). Takebuchi does not disclose the use of silicide with the common source line or contact (9). However the use of silicides for contact structures is well known in the art. Komori discloses that using a silicide in a contact plug has the benefit of reducing resistance which leads to an overall increase in operation speed (column 6, lines 7-14) for a semiconductor device. Furthermore Sheu et al. (USPN 6,350,654 B1, hereinafter referred to as the "Sheu" reference) discloses that faster memory devices are a known goal in the art (column 1, lines 15-35). Therefore in view of Komori and

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Sheu, it would be obvious to use silicide with the common source line or contact in the device of Takebuchi. The examiner notes the use of process steps in this claim (which is directed towards a semiconductor device). This places claim 18 into the form of a **product-by-process claim**:

Note that a "product by process" claim is directed to the product per se, no matter how actually made, *In re Hirao*, 190 USPQ 15 at 17 (footnote 3). See also *In re Thorpe*, 227 USPQ 964, 966; *In re Luck*, 177 USPQ 523; *In re Fessmann*, 180 USPQ 324; *In re Avery*, 186 USPQ 161; *In re Wertheim*, 191 USPQ 90 (209 USPQ 554 does not deal with this issue); and *In re Marosi et al.*, 218 USPQ 289, all of which make it clear that it is the patentability of the final product per se which must be determined in a "product by process" claim, and not the patentability of the process, and that an old or obvious product produced by a new method is not patentable as a product, whether claimed in "product by process" claims or not. Note that applicant has the burden of proof in such cases, as the above case law makes clear. See also MPEP 2113.

Claim 18 does not distinguish over the Takebuchi, Komori, and Sheu references regardless of the process used to form the non-volatile memory device, because only the final product is relevant, and not the process of making.

Allowable Subject Matter

8. Claims 1, 2, 4, 5, 7-15, and 17 are allowed.
9. The following is a statement of reasons for the indication of allowable subject matter: the examiner is unaware of any prior art which suggests the formation of a common source line in a non-volatile semiconductor memory device by planarizing the common source line down to the same level as the polishing stop layer on the control gate/floating gate stack.

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Kevin Quinto whose telephone number is (571) 272-1920. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F 8AM-5PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Nathan Flynn can be reached on (571) 272-1915. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

KVQ


Minhloan Tran
Primary Examiner
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